

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. – 30. (cancelled)
31. (currently amended) A method for treating substrates in at least one of two tanks, each of which can be filled with at least two treatment fluids, said method being carried out for each of said tanks and including the steps of:
- a) preparing a first treatment fluid in a processing unit that is common to both of said tanks, wherein said processing unit has a capacity designed for a single treatment tank;
 - b) charging one of said tanks with substrates;
 - c) introducing said treatment fluid into said one tank for a predetermined period of time to contact said substrates;
 - d) introducing at least a second treatment fluid into said one tank to contact said substrates; and
 - e) removing said substrates from said one tank tanks; wherein said steps are controlled in parallel and in a time staggered manner, in the respective tanks in such a way that a period of time sufficient for the preparation of said first treatment fluid is provided between the end of step c) in said one tank and the start of step c) in the other of said tanks

f) preparing said first treatment fluid in said processing unit that is common to both of said tanks;

g) charging the other of said tanks with substrates;

h) introducing said treatment fluid into said other tank for a predetermined period of time to contact said substrates;

i) introducing at least a second treatment fluid into said other tank to contact said substrates; and

j) removing said substrates from said other tank, steps a) to e) for said one tank and steps f) to j) for said other tank being performed in parallel and in a time staggered manner in the respective tanks in such a way that a period of time sufficient for the preparation of said first treatment fluid for subsequent introduction thereof into said other tank is provided between the end of step c) in said one tank and the start of step h) in said other tank.

32. (original) A method according to claim 31, wherein said first treatment fluid is discharged prior to said introduction of said second treatment fluid.
33. (currently amended) A method according to claim 31, wherein said first treatment fluid is displaced out of said one tank prior to said introduction of said second treatment fluid.
34. (currently amended) A method according to claim 31, wherein said preparing step comprises preparing said first treatment fluid from ~~different~~ a plurality of chemicals which differ from each other, and wherein during said

preparation said first treatment fluid is subjected to at least one of mixing and heating steps.

35. (original) A method according to claim 31, wherein after conclusion of said step c) said first treatment fluid is at least partially returned to said processing unit.
36. (original) A method according to claim 31, wherein preparation of said first treatment fluid and unloading of said tank at least partially overlap one another in terms of time.
37. (currently amended) A method according to claim 31, which includes the further step of introducing a third treatment fluid into at least one of said tanks.
38. (original) A method according to claim 37, wherein at least one of said second and said third treatment fluids is a rinsing fluid.
39. (currently amended) A method according to claim 37, wherein at least one of said second and said third treatment fluids is supplied into a respective one of said tanks ~~are made available~~ by means of one of a pair of respective treatment fluid supply units, one of which is dedicated to the supply of said second treatment fluid and another of which is dedicated to the supply of said third treatment fluid with each of said treatment fluid supply units being that are common to both of said tanks.
40. (original) A method according to claim 31, wherein a single handling mechanism is provided for both charging and unloading both of said tanks.

41. (original) A method according to claim 40, wherein for a charging and unloading of said one tank, said substrates are moved over said other tank, and wherein such movement is effected only during a rinsing process in said other tank.
42. (currently amended) A method according to claim 41 40, wherein ~~one of said tanks~~ said other tank is covered during a movement of said handling mechanism thereover.
43. (currently amended) A method according to claim 42, wherein said other tank is covered by means of an essentially flat lid.
44. (currently amended) A method according to claim 40, wherein said handling mechanism ~~accesses~~ is in the form of a common introduction/delivery station that is operable to alternately charge into said tanks substrates to be treated and unload treated substrates from said tanks.
45. (currently amended) A method according to claim 31, wherein during removal of said substrates from a respective tank, said substrates are dried pursuant to the Marangoni principle ~~principal~~.
46. (currently amended) An apparatus for treating substrates comprising:
two tanks that are fillable with at least two treatment fluids;
handling means for respectively loading or unloading substrates relative to said tanks;

at least one first treatment fluid supply unit that is common to and
connected to both of said tanks and has at least one treatment fluid processing
unit, the capacity of which is designed for a single tank;

at least one second treatment fluid supply unit; and

a control unit for a time staggered control of parallel process steps of
respective ones of said tanks in such a way that between process steps that
utilize the same treatment fluid, a period of time remains that is sufficient for a
preparation of that treatment fluid.

47. (original) An apparatus according to claim 46, wherein each of said tanks is
provided with a respective rapid discharge valve.
48. (original) An apparatus according to claim 47, wherein each tank is provided
with an overflow.
49. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, wherein said
at least one treatment fluid processing unit is provided with at least one of a
chemical mixing device and a heating device.
50. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, wherein said
at least one first treatment fluid supply unit has a fluid circuit in which treatment
fluid can be constantly kept moving to prevent a separation or static alteration of
the treatment fluid in said at least one first treatment fluid supply unit.
51. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, which
includes a device for returning treatment fluid from said tanks to said at least one
first treatment fluid supply unit.

52. (original) An apparatus according to claim 51, which includes a reprocessing unit within said at least one first treatment fluid supply unit.
53. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, which includes a common substrate handling mechanism for a charging and unloading of both of said tanks.
54. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 53, which includes a movable cover for at least one of said tanks.
55. (original) An apparatus according to claim 54, wherein said cover is an essentially flat lid.
56. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, which includes an introduction/delivery station for ~~making~~ holding substrates ~~available~~ for both of said tanks and receiving substrates from both of said tanks.
57. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, which includes a device for ~~concentrating~~ increasing the density of substrates for treatment in said tanks via reduction of the spacing between adjacent substrates.
58. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 46 48, wherein at least two of an introduction station, ~~said~~ a device for concentrating said substrates through an increase in the density of substrates for treatment in said tanks effected via reduction of the spacing between adjacent substrates, and said two tanks are disposed in a row.
59. (original) An apparatus according to claim 57, wherein said two tanks are disposed on different sides of said device for concentrating the substrates.

60. (new) A method for treating substrates in two tanks, each of which can be filled with at least two treatment fluids, said method being carried out for each of said tanks and including the steps of:

preparing an initial batch of a first treatment fluid in a processing unit that is common to both of one of said tanks and the other of said tanks, wherein said processing unit has a capacity designed for a single treatment tank;

charging said one tank with substrates;

introducing said initial batch of said first treatment fluid that has been prepared in said processing unit into said one tank for a predetermined period of time during which said first treatment fluid contacts said substrates within said one tank;

introducing at least a second treatment fluid into said one tank such that said second treatment fluid contacts said substrates within said one tank;

removing said substrates from said one tank no sooner than after said substrates have been contacted by said second treatment fluid;

prior to said step of removing said substrates from said one tank, preparing a subsequent batch of said first treatment fluid in said processing unit;

charging said other tank with substrates;

introducing said subsequent batch of said first treatment fluid that has been prepared in said processing unit into said other tank for a predetermined period of time during which said first treatment fluid contacts said substrates within said other tank;

introducing at least a second treatment fluid into said other tank such that
said second treatment fluid contacts said substrates within said other tank; and
removing said substrates from said other tank no sooner than after said
substrates have been contacted by said second treatment fluid.